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DPD-2039-60

9 March 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)

THROUGH : Acting Chief, DPD-DD/P W.B. [Signature]

SUBJECT : Viet Nam Airbases

1. As per your request, the undersigned made an inspection of airbases in Viet Nam and the following report is submitted on three bases that were visited:

A. Tourane

(1) This Viet Nam's second best airfield. It is frequently used by USAF aircraft for refueling. It is a point of entry and customs for Viet Nam. This airfield is suitable for C-121, C-124 and C-130 type aircraft.

(2) Runway length is 7,850 feet by 200 feet wide. It is constructed of asphalt with concrete underbase. The weight bearing is 132,000 pounds; single wheel, 42,000 pounds.

(3) There are four large hangars and one nose hangar. (Two hangars are in very poor condition).

(4) Fuel: Pit pressure system, 264,000 gallons, 100/130 octane; drum storage, 38,000 gallons, 80 octane and 60,420 gallons, 115/145 octane. Additional storage may be had at Iden Chan, six miles northwest. There is no JP4 storage, however, it can be obtained on five days notice in drums.

(5) BQ's and mess hall are available, however, they were in a restricted area and could not be visited without a pass from Viet Nam Air Force.

(6) The field has low frequency NDB and VOR communications.

COMMENT: This is an excellent airfield used frequently by USAF aircraft for refueling and one night stopovers causing little concern. The space is under the observation of the ICC team and should a number of U.S. planes be stationed there for a week or ten days, it is believed that it would cause considerable contention by ICC. The ICC team is composed of Canadian, Polish and Indian representatives.



B. Tan Son Nhut

(1) This is Viet Nam's best airfield used by international traffic for C-97, C-121 and C-130 type aircraft. This airfield is a port of entry and customs.

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SECRET

REF-2039-60

PAGE TWO

(2) One runway is 5,521 feet in length and 120 feet wide. It is constructed of macadam with a weight bearing of forty tons. The other runway is 7,796 feet in length and 130 feet wide. It is constructed of macadam with a weight bearing of sixty tons.

(3) This airfield is equipped with low frequency NDB and VOR communications. The airfield frequency is used by USAF aircraft enroute to the Philippines, Bangkok or return.

(4) Aircraft parked on the commercial side, control tower area, are subject to scrutiny by ICC personnel. Aircraft parked on the military side are free from ICC observation. It is not wise for unmarked aircraft to use Tan Son Nhut airfield. Frequent USAF use not unduly alarming.

(5) Fuel in abundance is available. Jet fuel can be obtained on order.

(6) Billeting of personnel would have to be in the city of Saigon.

C. Bain Hoa

(1) This is Viet Nam's only purely military airfield. It is the home station for VNAF fighter forces. It is used by F-8F, C-47 and C-54 type aircraft. No customs.

(2) The runway is 5,800 feet long and 140 feet wide. Its construction is PDP sprayed with asphalt.

(3) The base is poorly constructed. Rough. There are five closed type hangars and one open hangar.

(4) Fuel: One tank, 26,000 gallons, 115/145 octane; three tanks, 6,000 gallons each, 70 and 80 octane; refuelers, three 4,000 gallon, 115/145 octane; one 1,980 gallon, 80 octane; JP4 fuel can be had on 5 days notice.

(5) Quarters and messing facilities for personnel limited.

(6) I did not visit this field, however, I observed it from the air and the above information on the field was obtained from Lt. Col. Bieck, Air Force attache at the Embassy.

COMMENT: VNAF requires special permission for USAF aircraft to use this field. Bain Hoa is not secure from observation and is continually subject of contention by ICC alleging the U.S. is using it as a secret establishment. It is recommended by Lt. Col. Bieck that this field not be considered for our use.

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ATTACHMENT:
Descriptions of above named bases

Engineer General
Material Branch
BPD-DD/P

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